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(54) **SPATIALLY OFFSET HAPTIC FEEDBACK**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
CPC ..... **G06F 3/014** (2013.01); **G06F 3/016** (2013.01); **G06F 3/017** (2013.01); **G06T 19/006** (2013.01); **G06T 2210/21** (2013.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

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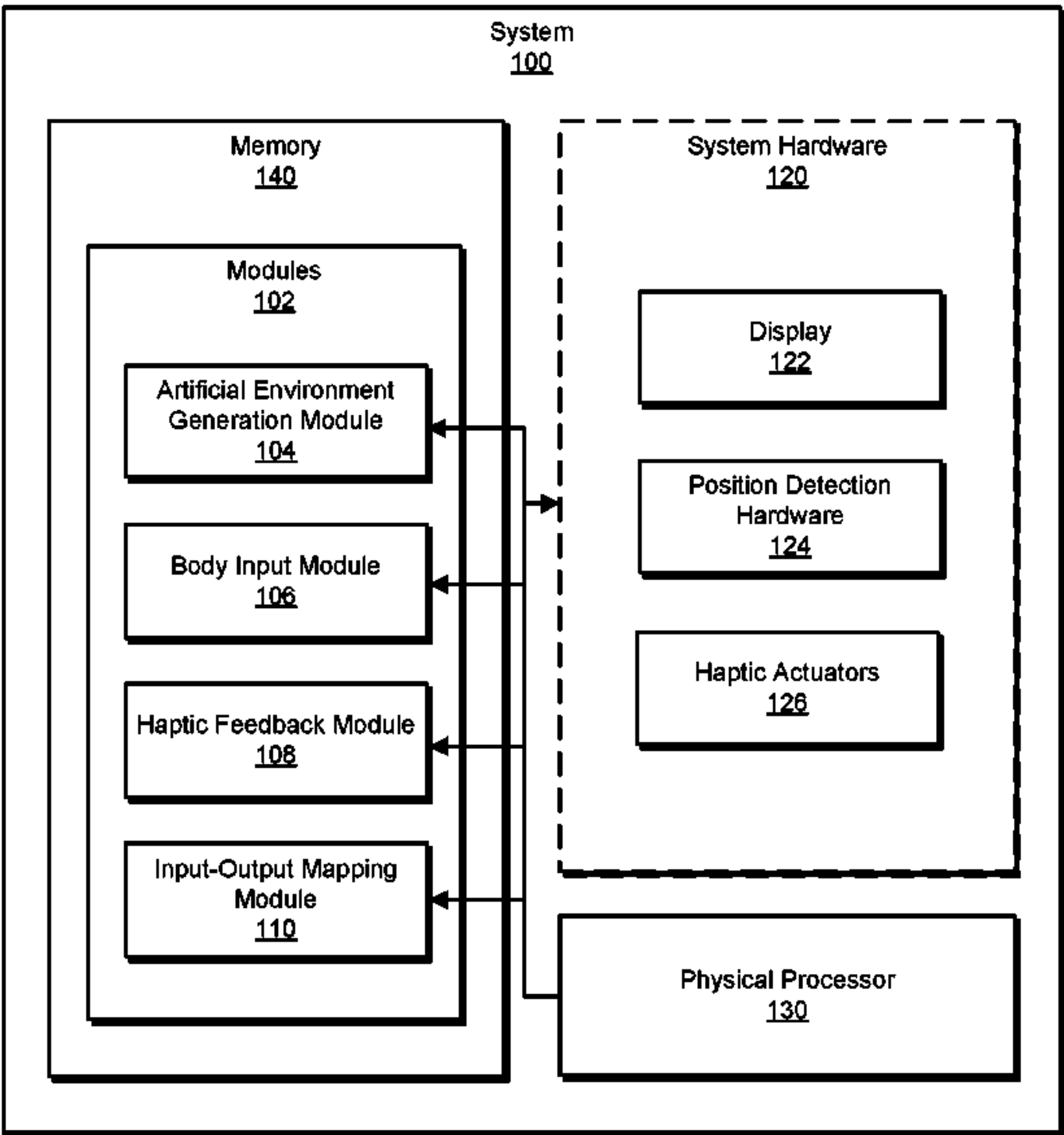
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The disclosed system may include (1) a processor that generates an artificial environment that includes a virtual object, (2) a display that presents the artificial environment, (3) an input subsystem that detects tracks positioning of a body, and (4) a plurality of haptic actuators that are arranged to apply haptic feedback to a first plurality of locations on the body, where the processor (a) determines, based on the positioning of the body, a virtual contact of one of a second plurality of locations on the body with the virtual object, where the second plurality of locations is different from the first plurality of locations, and (b) activates, in response to the virtual contact, at least one of the plurality of haptic actuators based on a mapping of the second plurality of locations to the plurality of haptic actuators. Various other systems and methods are also disclosed.

**20 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets**





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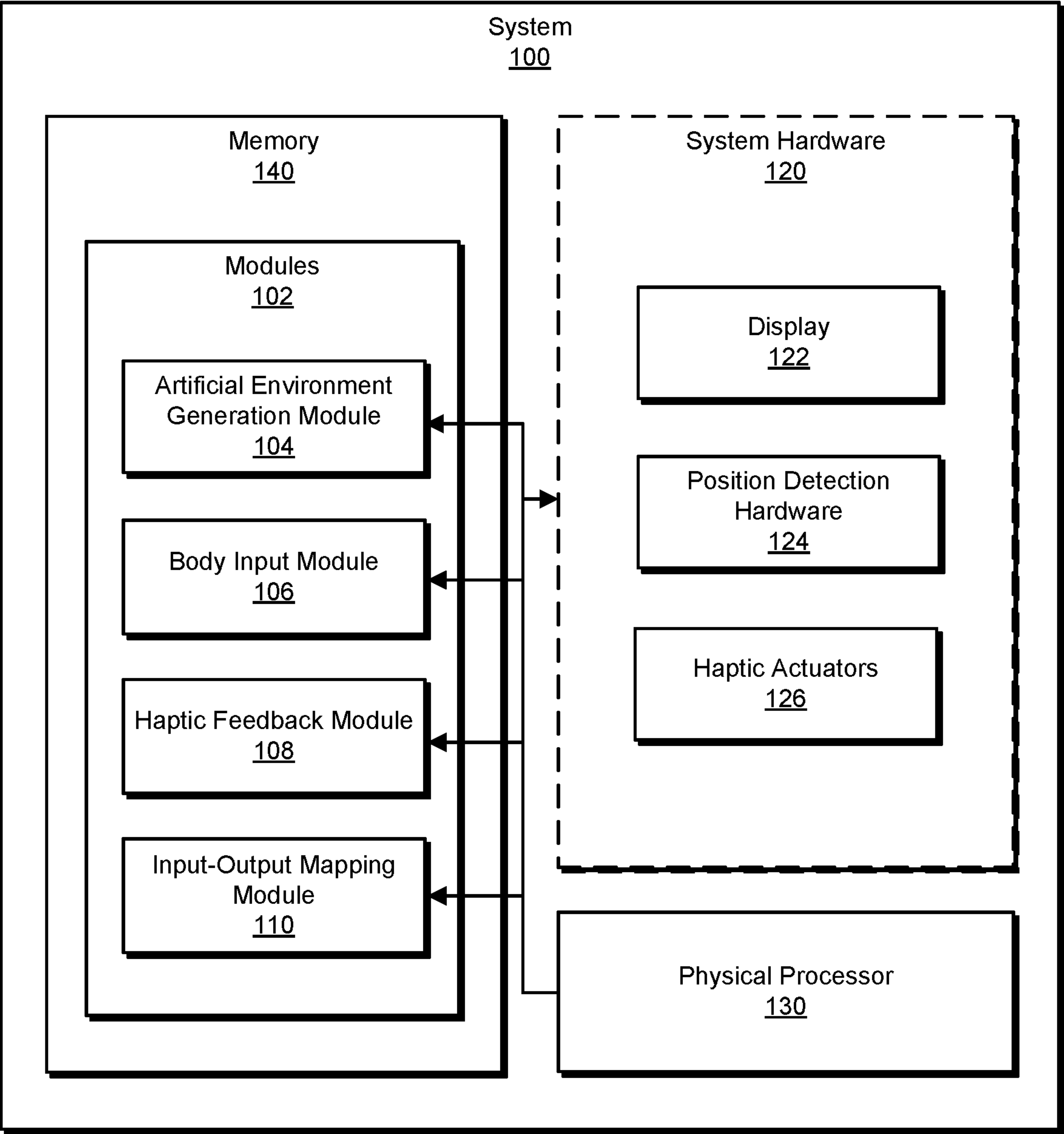
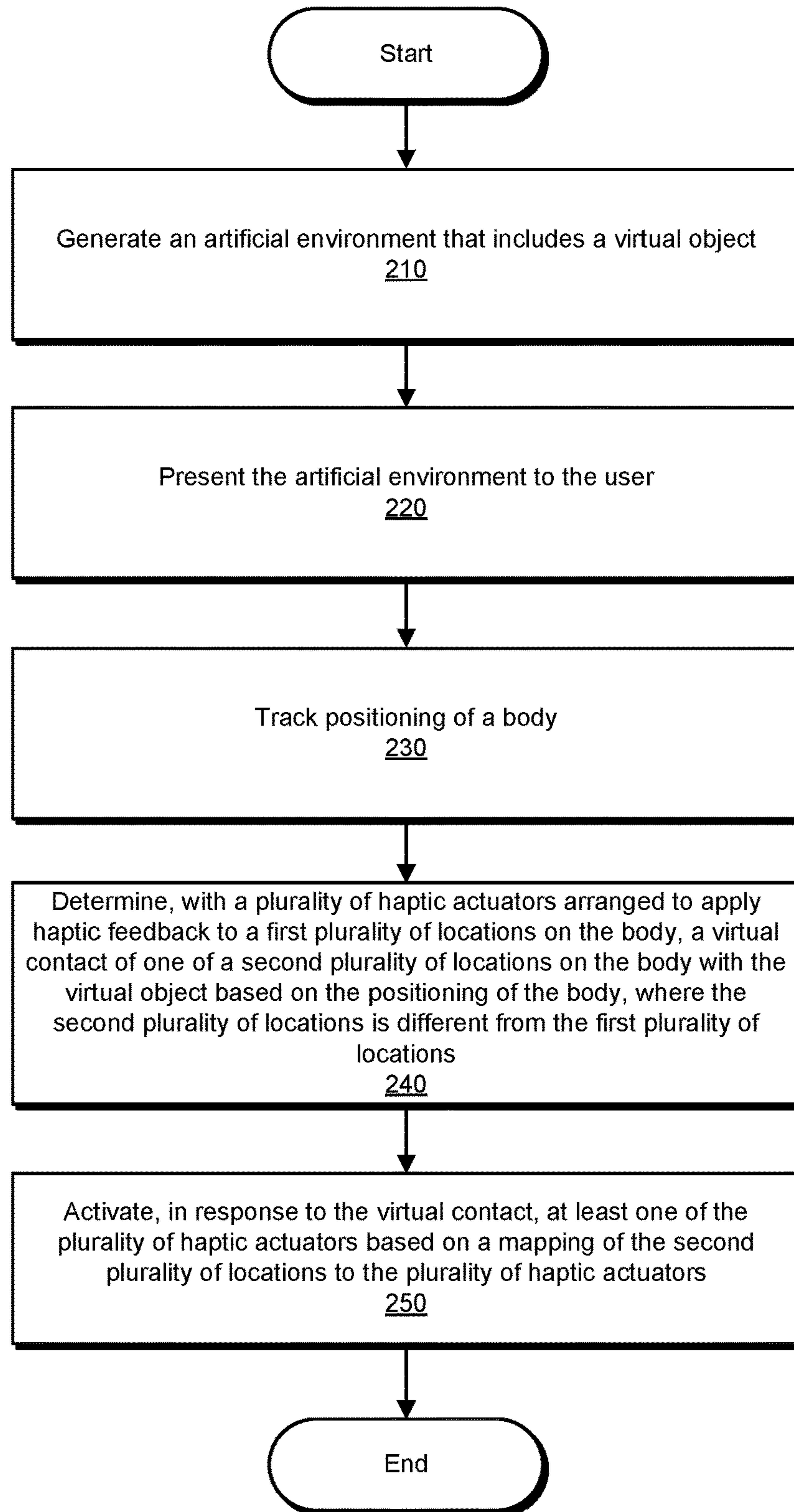


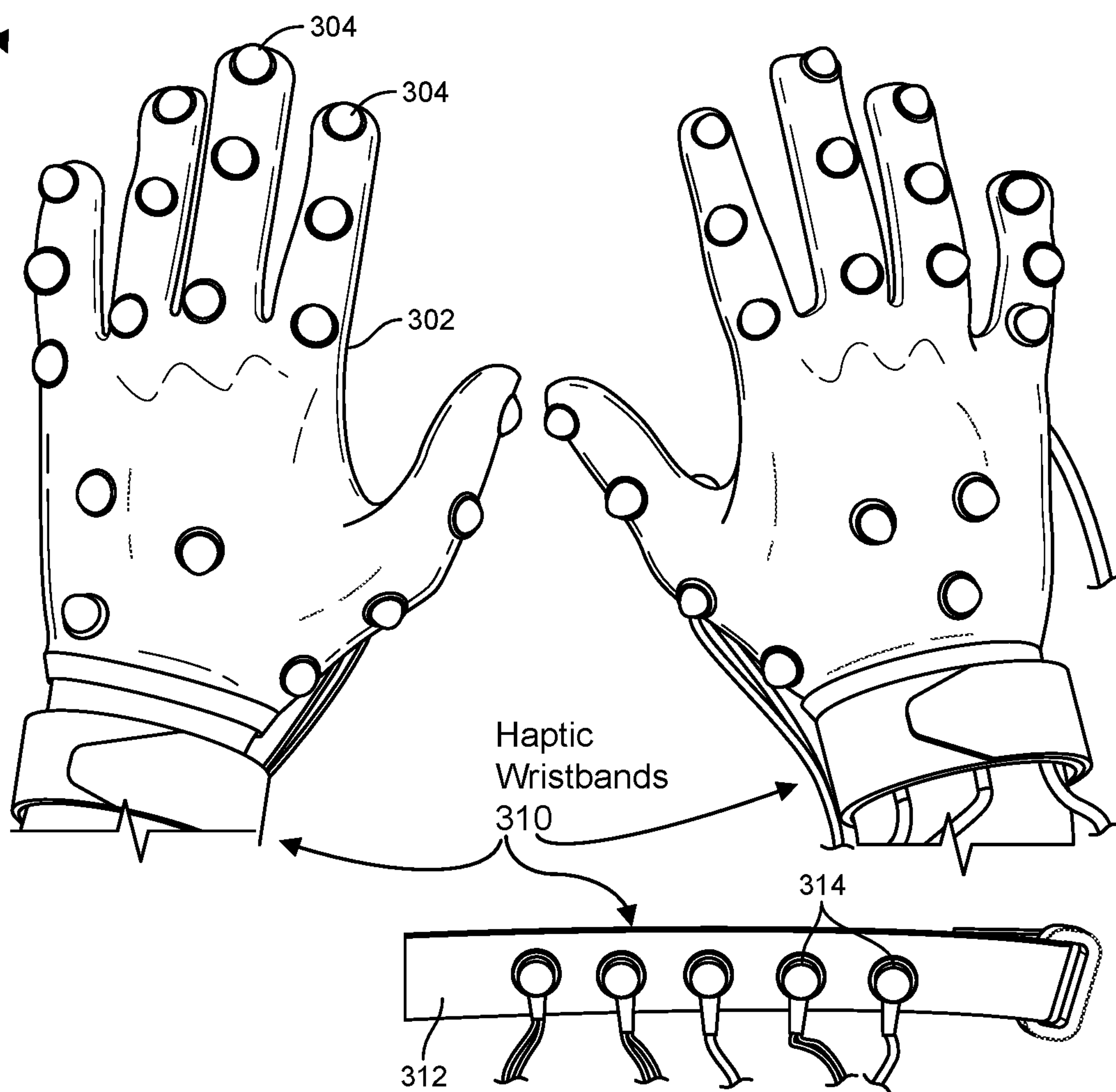
FIG. 1

Method  
200



**FIG. 2**

Haptic Gloves  
300



**FIG. 3**

Haptic Gloves  
300

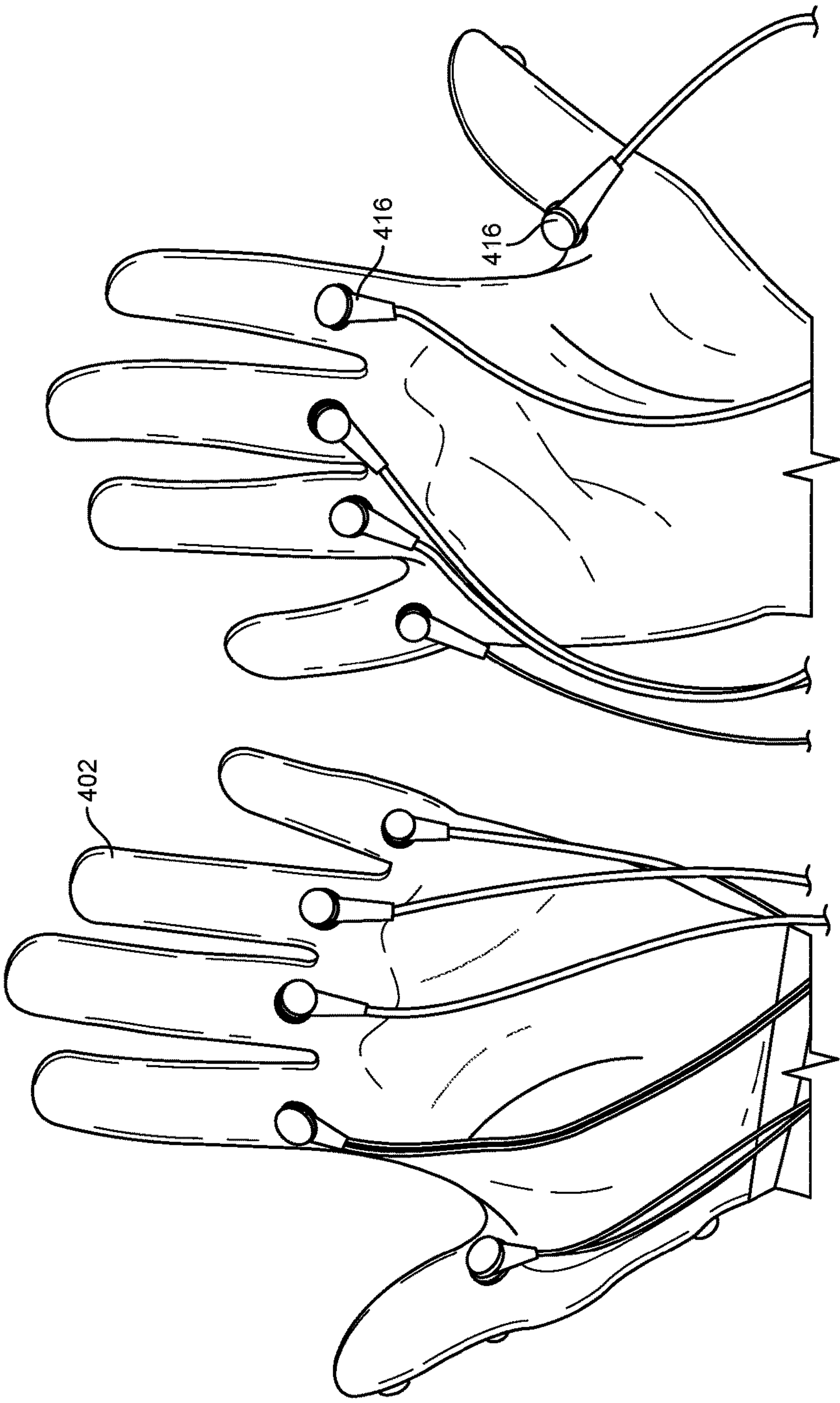
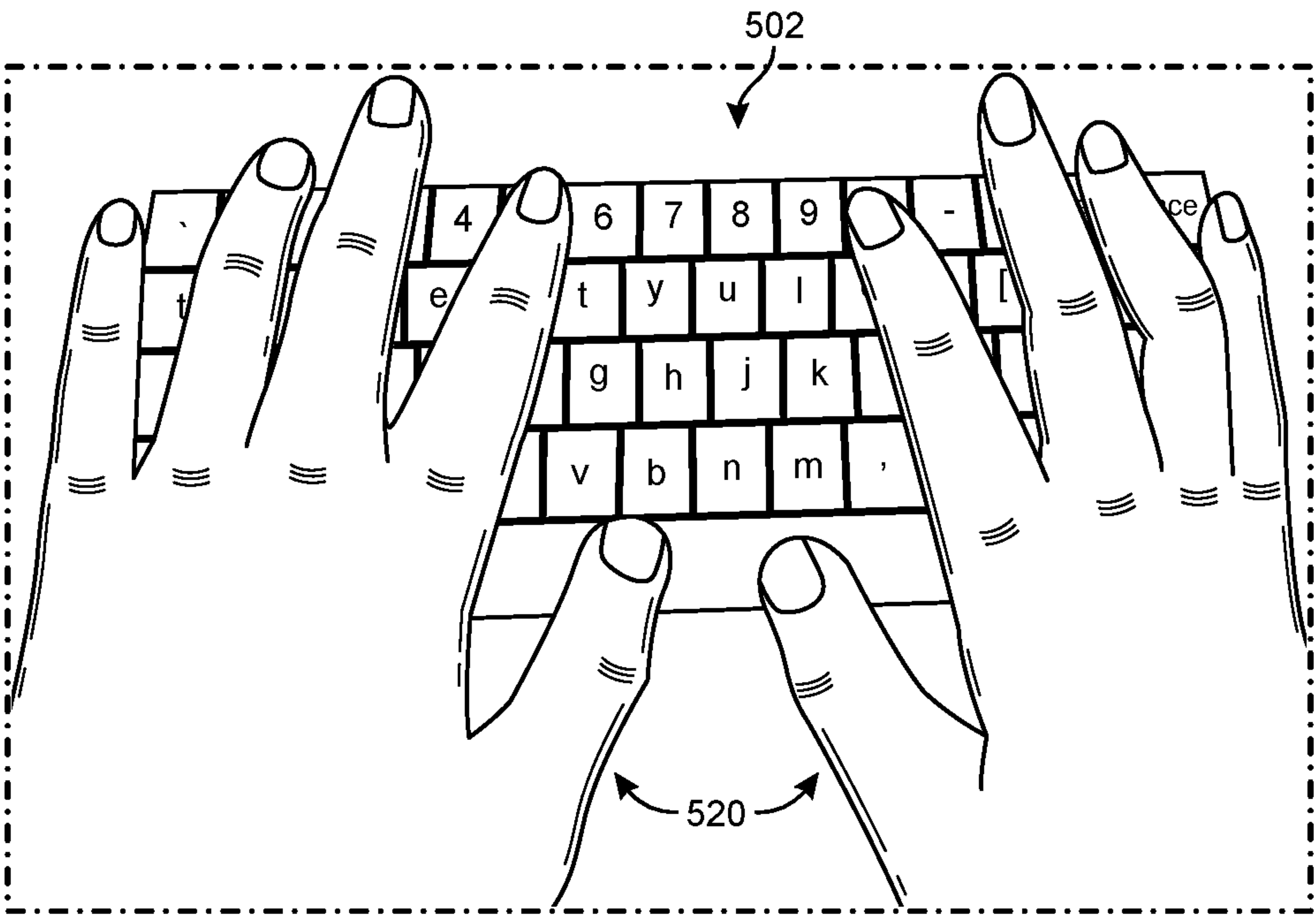


FIG. 4

Virtual Keyboard Example (Pre-Hover)  
500



Virtual Keyboard Example (Hover)  
501

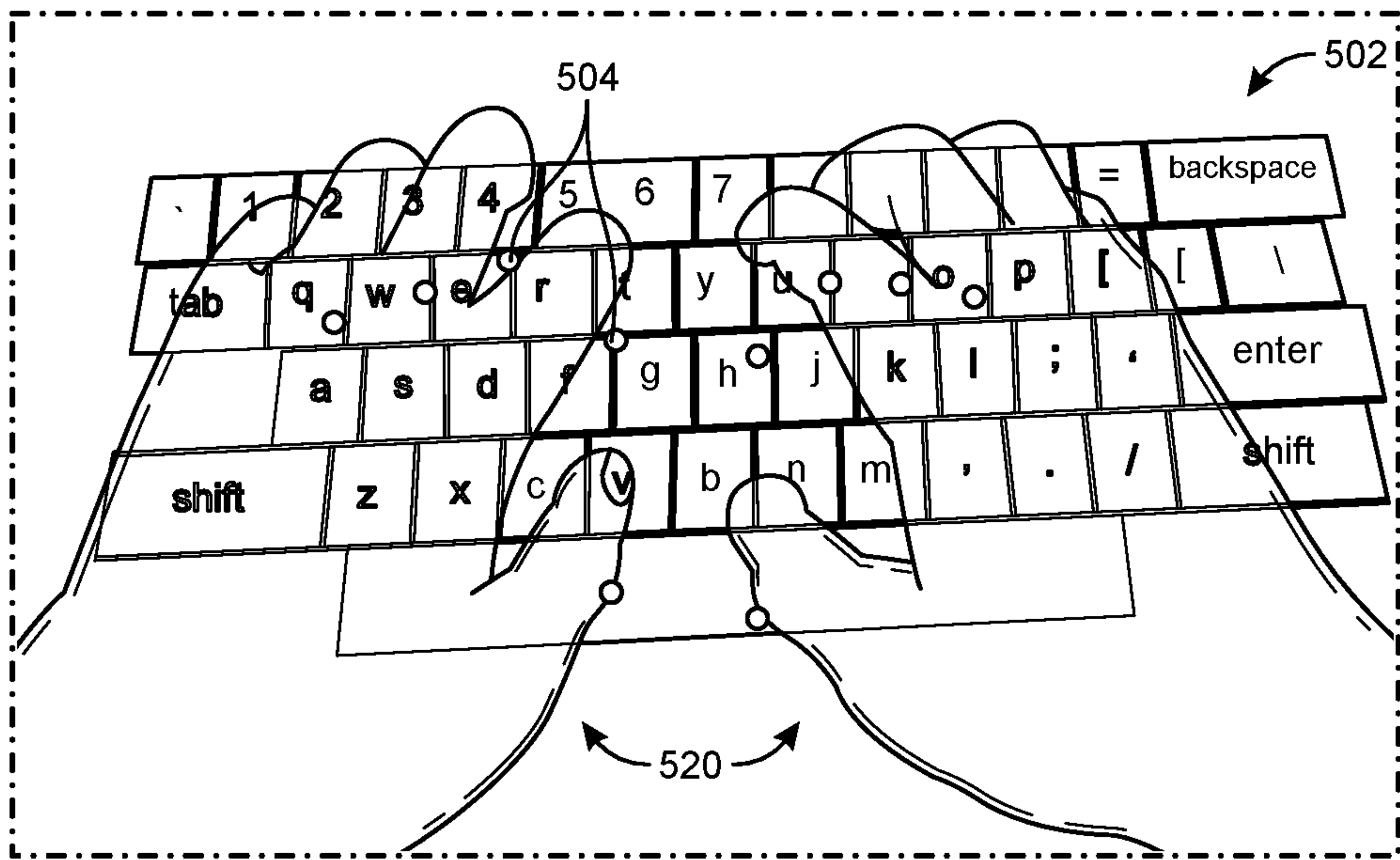
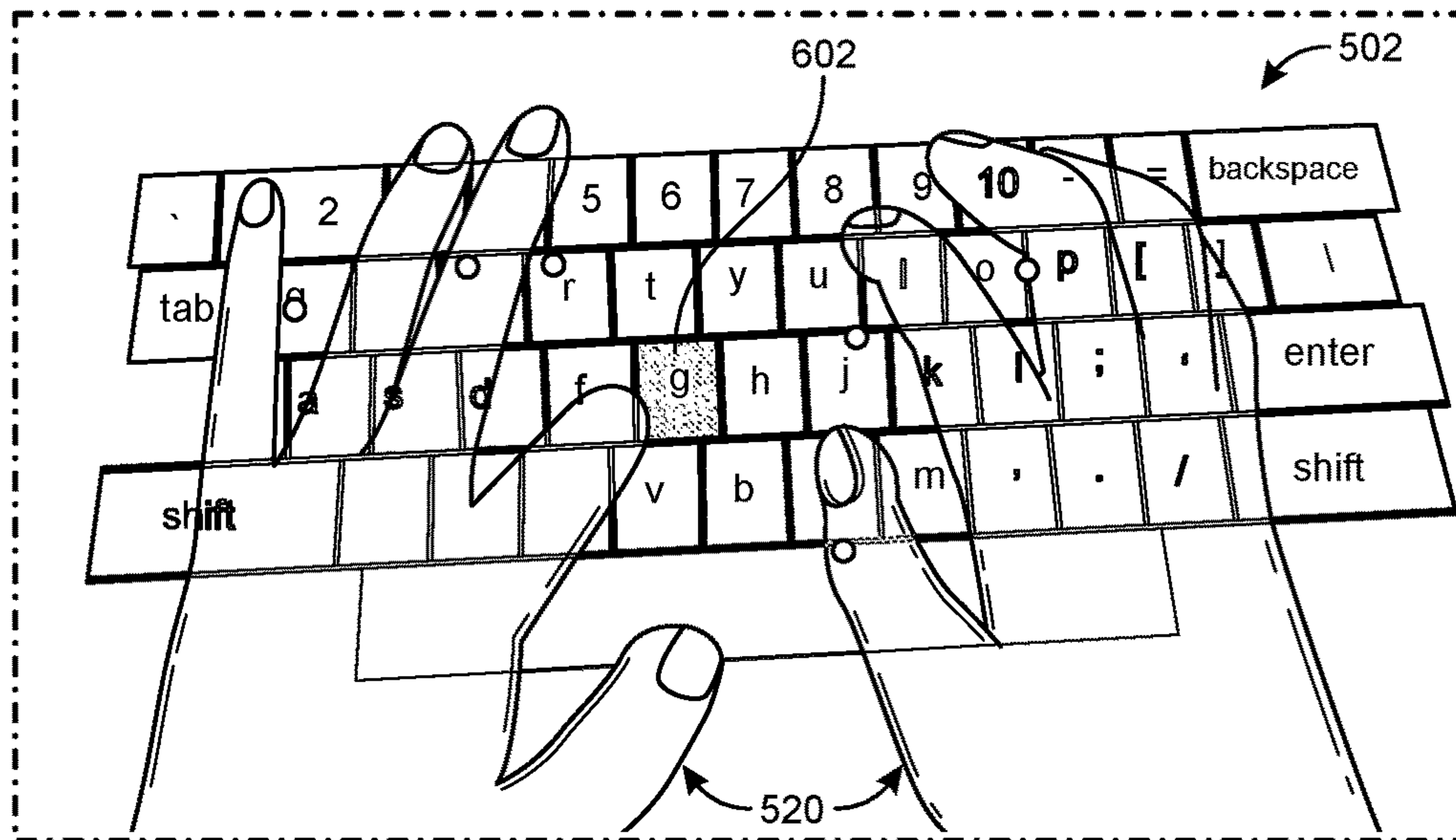


FIG. 5



Virtual Keyboard Example (Collision)

600



Virtual Keyboard Example (Keypress)

601

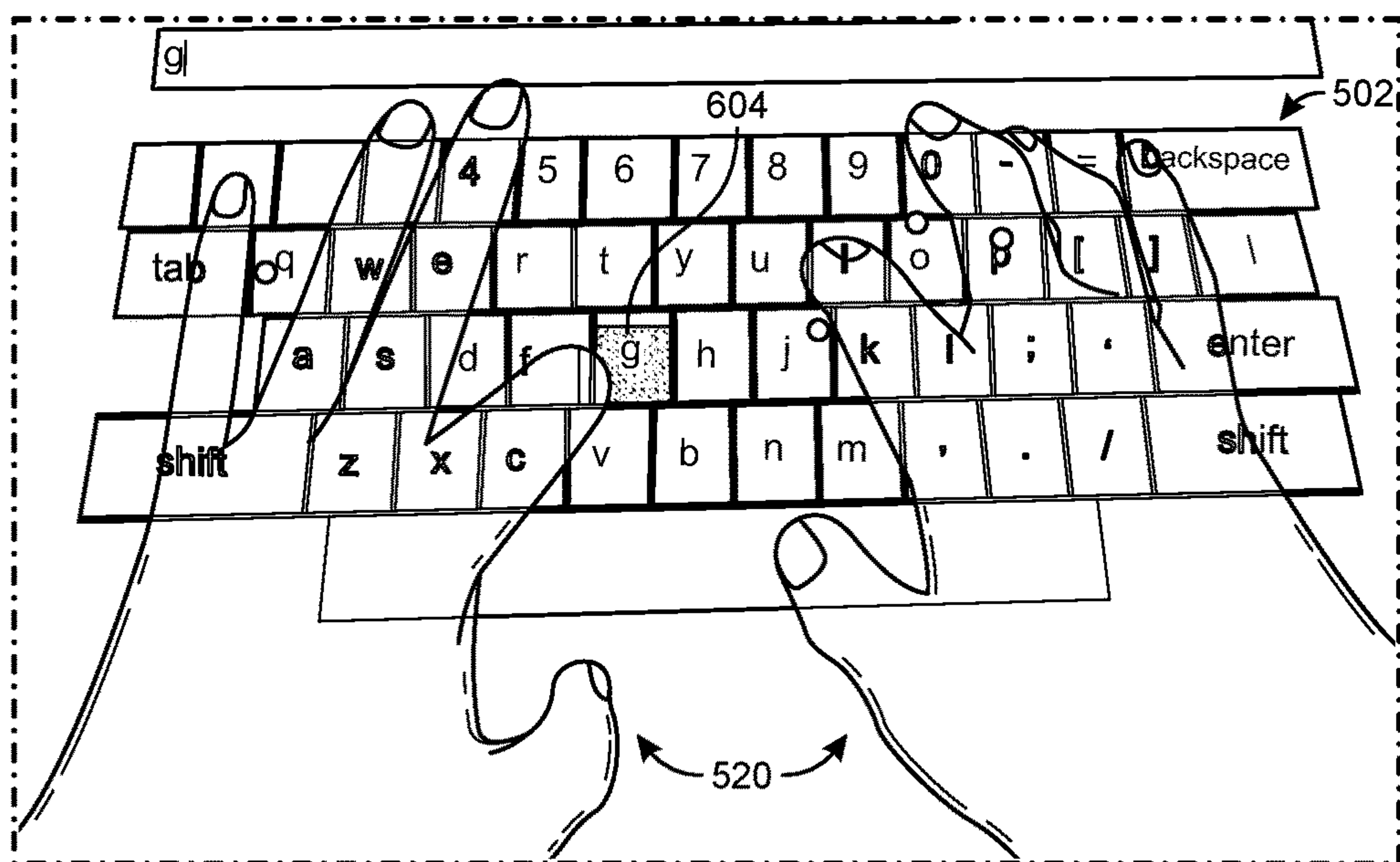
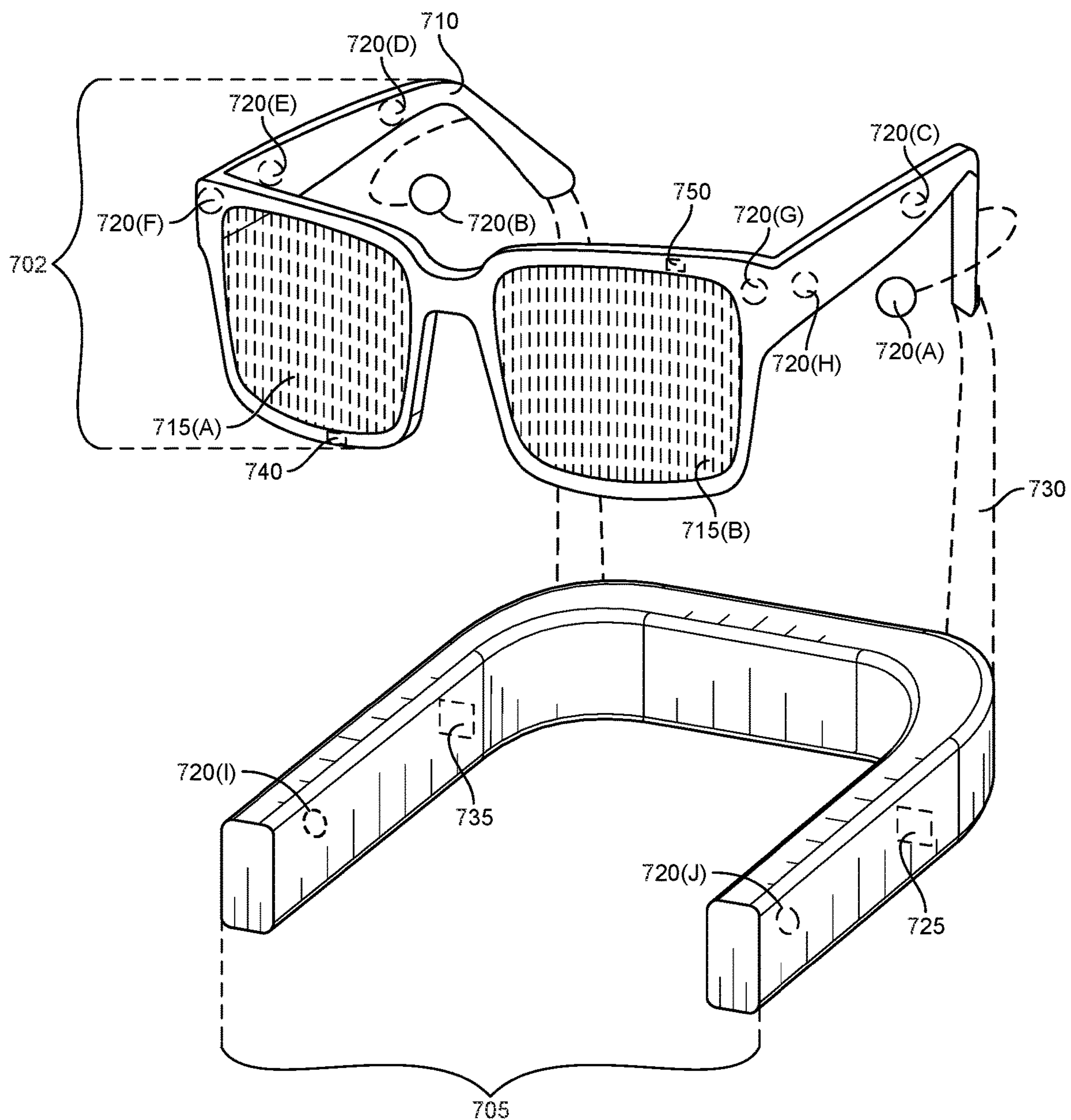


FIG. 6

System  
700



**FIG. 7**

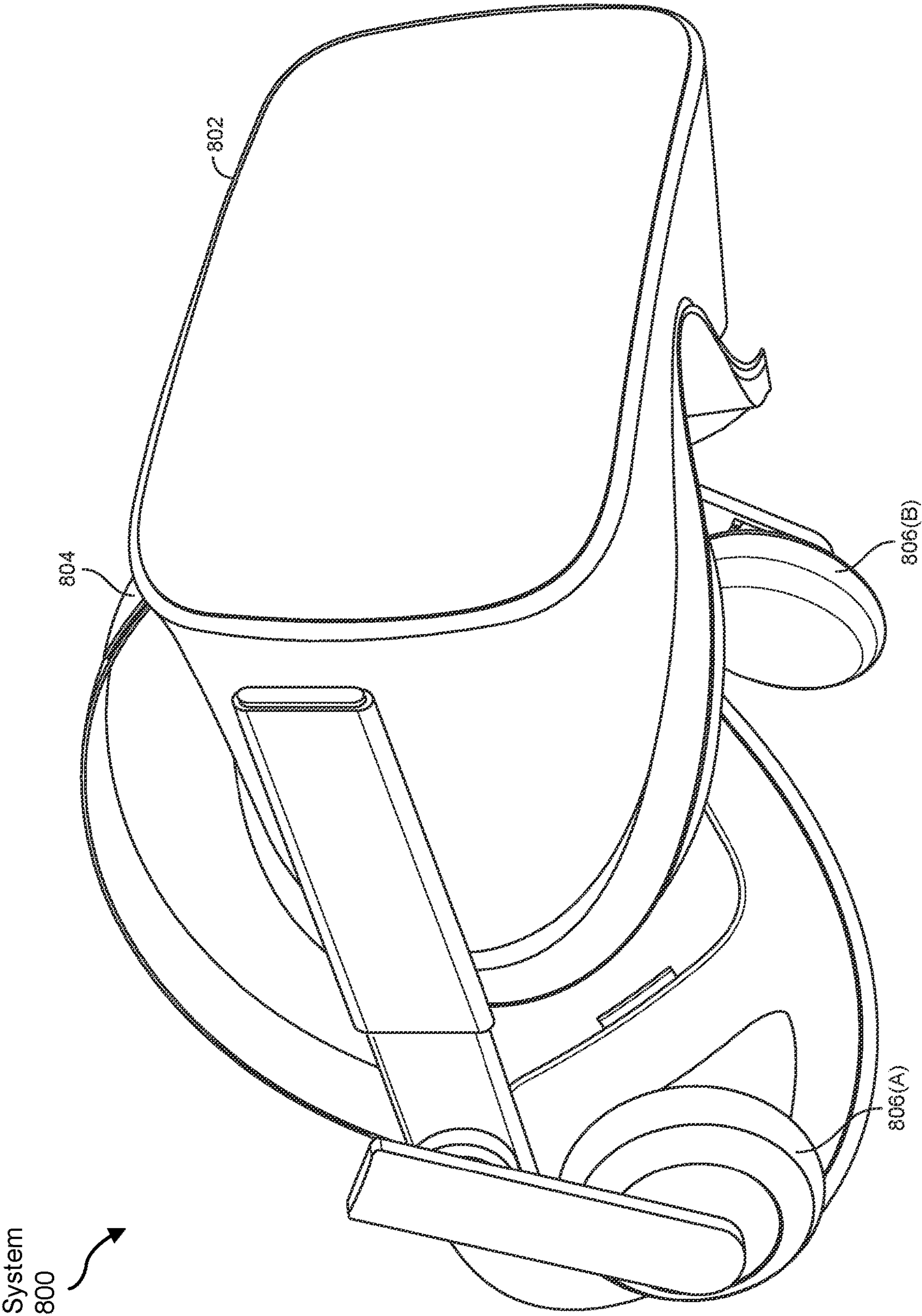
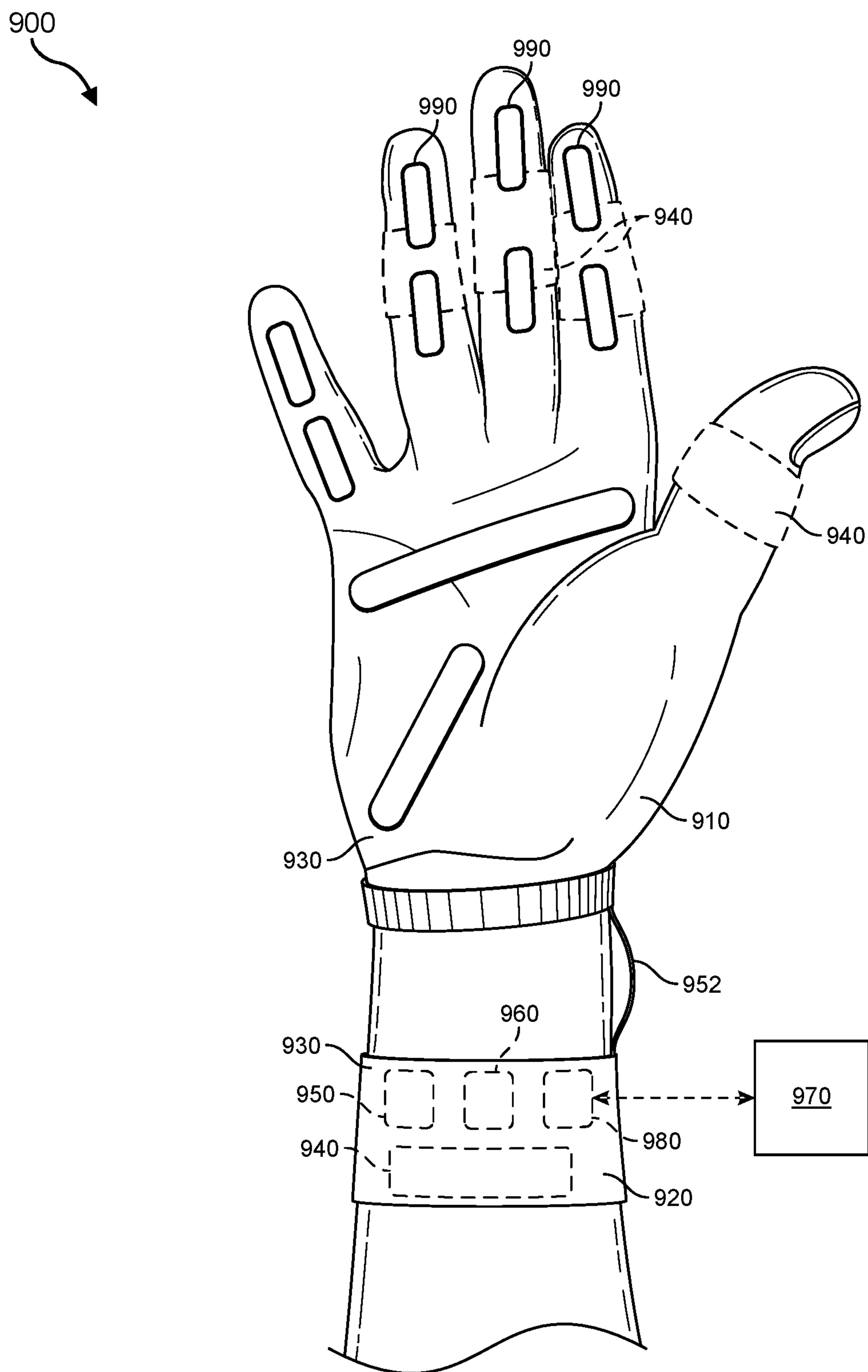


FIG. 8





**FIG. 9**

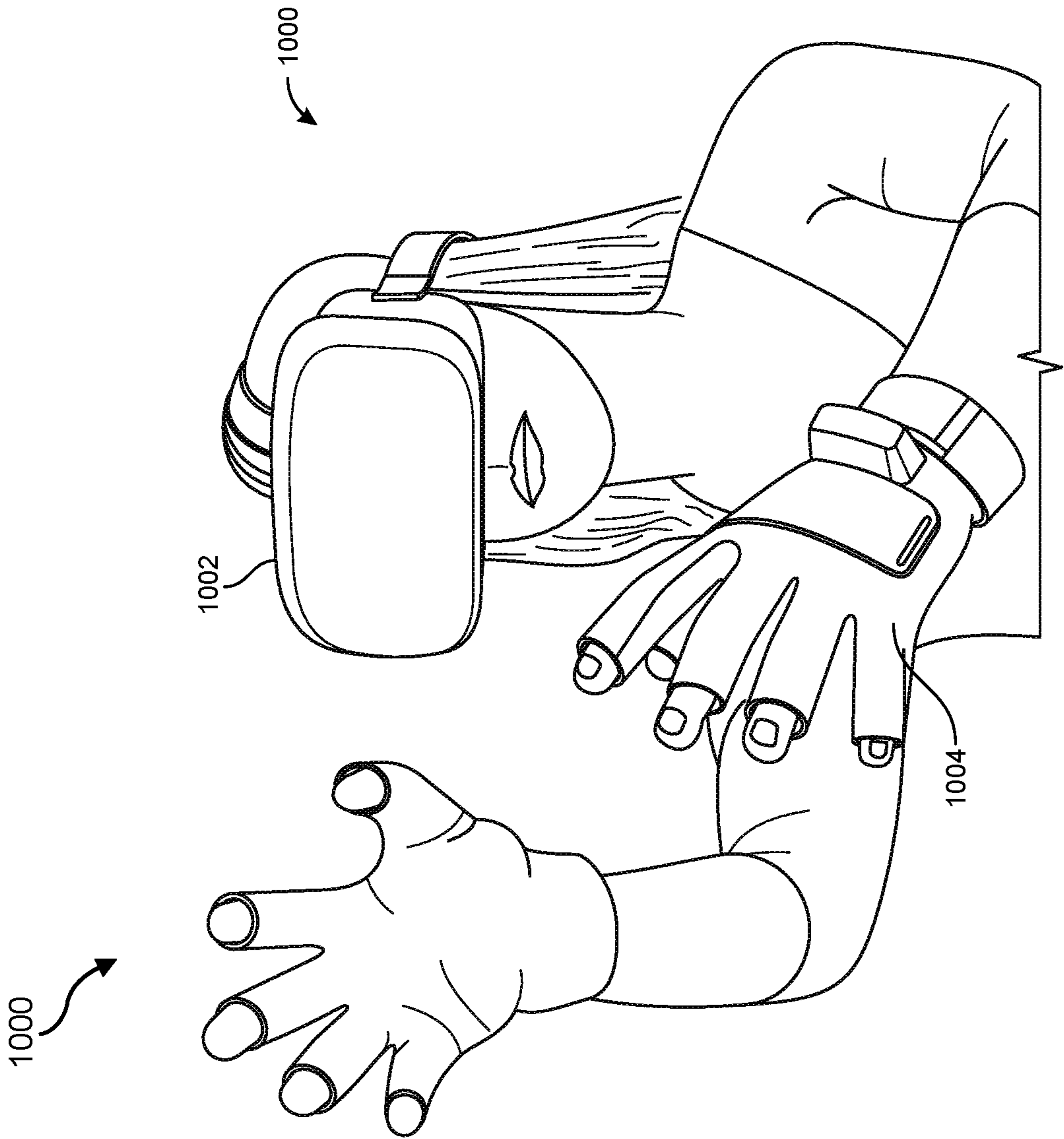
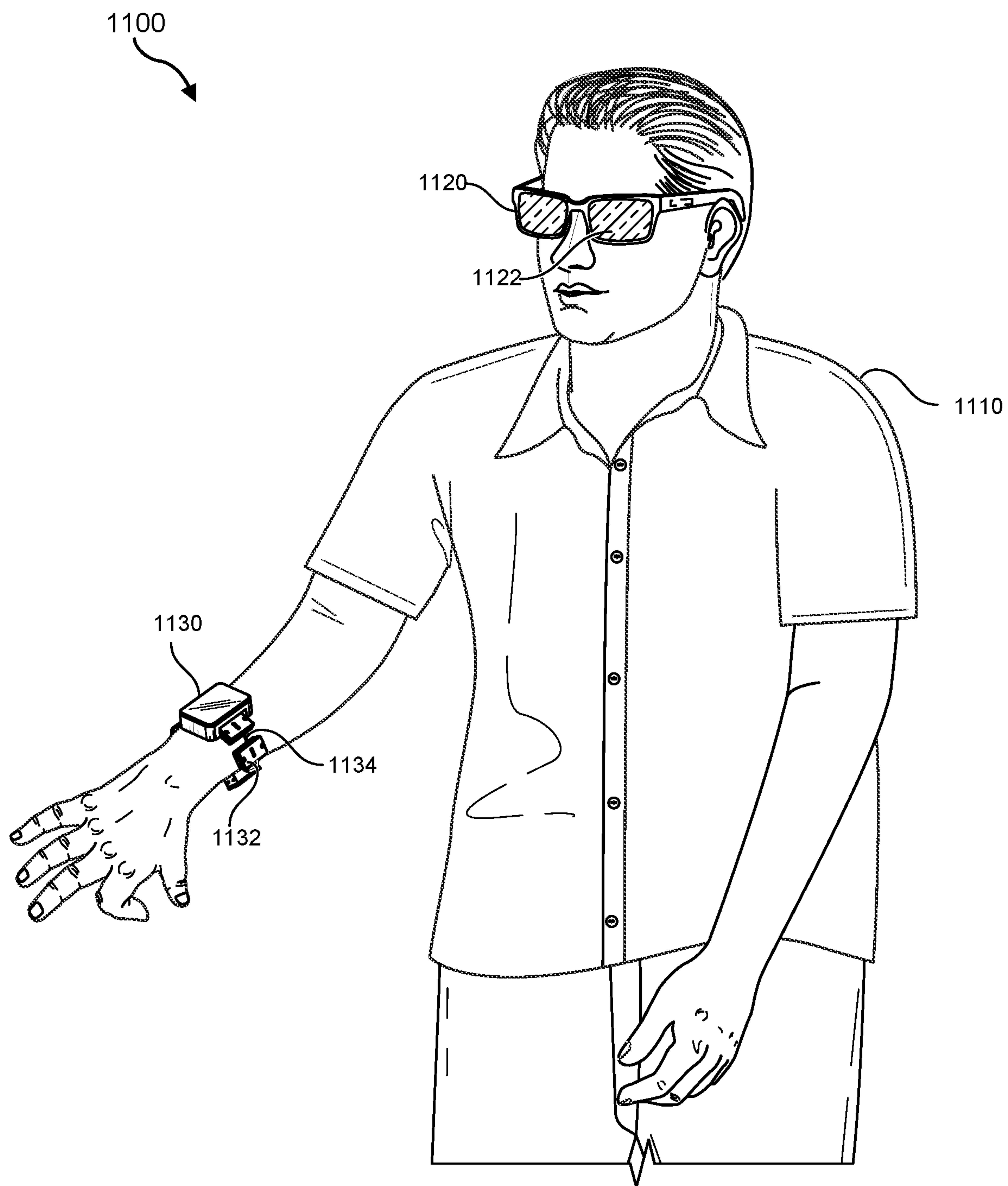


FIG. 10



**FIG. 11**



**SPATIALLY OFFSET HAPTIC FEEDBACK****CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 16/847,327, filed 13 Apr. 2020, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 62/899,596, filed 12 Sep. 2019, the disclosure of which is incorporated, in its entirety, by this reference.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

The accompanying drawings illustrate a number of exemplary embodiments and are a part of the specification. Together with the following description, these drawings demonstrate and explain various principles of the present disclosure.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an exemplary system (e.g., an artificial-reality system) that employs spatially offset haptic feedback.

FIG. 2 is a flow diagram of an exemplary method for presenting an artificial environment that includes spatially offset haptic feedback.

FIGS. 3 and 4 include views of exemplary haptic gloves and associated haptic wristbands that may provide spatially offset haptic feedback.

FIGS. 5 and 6 include views of an exemplary virtual keyboard with which a user may interact while experiencing spatially offset haptic feedback.

FIG. 7 is an illustration of exemplary augmented-reality glasses that may be used in connection with embodiments of this disclosure.

FIG. 8 is an illustration of an exemplary virtual-reality headset that may be used in connection with embodiments of this disclosure.

FIG. 9 is an illustration of exemplary haptic devices that may be used in connection with embodiments of this disclosure.

FIG. 10 is an illustration of an exemplary virtual-reality environment according to embodiments of this disclosure.

FIG. 11 is an illustration of an exemplary augmented-reality environment according to embodiments of this disclosure.

Throughout the drawings, identical reference characters and descriptions indicate similar, but not necessarily identical, elements. While the exemplary embodiments described herein are susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments have been shown by way of example in the drawings and will be described in detail herein. However, the exemplary embodiments described herein are not intended to be limited to the particular forms disclosed. Rather, the present disclosure covers all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the scope of the appended claims.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS**

Electronic systems (e.g., artificial-reality systems) that interact or interface with a user in some way are increasingly incorporating haptic feedback to provide some level of acknowledgement in response to the user interacting with the systems. In some cases, the haptic feedback provided is in response to user contact with a virtual object being presented in at least a partially artificial environment. For example, in response to a system determining (e.g., by way

of detecting a current position of various portions of the user's body, such as by way of a camera) that a user makes contact with a virtual object, the system may provide haptic feedback (e.g., via a haptic actuator) at the point on the user's body at which the virtual contact is made.

The present disclosure is generally directed to spatially offset haptic feedback, in which haptic feedback may be provided at a point on the user's body that is different, or spatially offset, from the point of virtual contact on the user's body. As will be explained in greater detail below, embodiments of the present disclosure may deploy a plurality of haptic actuators that are arranged to apply haptic feedback to a first plurality of locations on the body and employ a mapping of a second plurality of locations on the body (e.g., that are different from the first plurality of locations) to the plurality of haptic actuators. Further, in some examples, in response to determining a virtual contact of one of the second plurality of locations with a virtual object, at least one of the haptic actuators may be activated based on the mapping. In some embodiments, such a system may provide haptic feedback supplied by a relatively few haptic actuators while providing effective feedback to the user.

Features from any of the embodiments described herein may be used in combination with one another in accordance with the general principles described herein. These and other embodiments, features, and advantages will be more fully understood upon reading the following detailed description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and claims.

The following will provide, with reference to FIGS. 1-11, detailed descriptions of systems and methods that may provide spatially offset haptic feedback. More specifically, an exemplary system (e.g., an artificial-reality system) that provides spatially offset haptic feedback is described in connection with FIG. 1, and a method of providing such feedback is discussed in relation to FIG. 2. In conjunction with FIGS. 3 and 4, exemplary haptic gloves and associated wristbands that may provide spatially offset haptic feedback are described. Use of spatially offset haptic feedback with respect to an exemplary virtual keyboard is explained in connection with FIGS. 5 and 6. Exemplary augmented-reality glasses and an exemplary virtual-reality headset that may be employed in conjunction with spatially offset haptic feedback are described in connection with FIGS. 7 and 8, respectively. Exemplary haptic devices that may be employed with the spatially offset haptic feedback embodiments described herein are discussed in conjunction with FIG. 9. Exemplary haptic feedback subsystems associated with an exemplary virtual-reality environment and an exemplary augmented-reality environment that may incorporate spatially offset haptic feedback are discussed in relation to FIGS. 10 and 11, respectively.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an exemplary system (e.g., an artificial-reality system, such as a virtual-reality or augmented-reality system) that may incorporate spatially offset haptic feedback. Portions of system 100, in some embodiments, may be entirely incorporated into a head-mounted device, headset, or similar component, while in other examples, one or more portions of system 100 may be resident in a system or facility external to such a device. As illustrated in FIG. 1, system 100 may include one or more modules 102 for performing one or more tasks. As will be explained in greater detail below, modules 102 may include an artificial environment generation module 104, a body input module 106, a haptic feedback module 108, and an input-output mapping module 110.



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In certain embodiments, one or more of modules **102** in FIG. **1** may represent one or more software applications or programs that, when executed by a computing device, may cause the computing device to perform one or more tasks. For example, and as will be described in greater detail below, one or more of modules **102** may represent modules stored and configured to run on one or more computing devices. One or more of modules **102** in FIG. **1** may also represent all or portions of one or more special-purpose computers configured to perform one or more tasks.

As illustrated in FIG. **1**, exemplary system **100** may also include one or more memory devices, such as memory **140**. Memory **140** generally represents any type or form of volatile or non-volatile storage device or medium capable of storing data and/or computer-readable instructions.

As also depicted in FIG. **1**, exemplary system **100** may further include one or more physical processors, such as physical processor **130**. Physical processor **130** generally represents any type or form of hardware-implemented processing unit capable of interpreting and/or executing computer-readable instructions. In one example, physical processor **130** may access and/or modify one or more of modules **102** stored in memory **140**. Additionally or alternatively, physical processor **130** may execute one or more of modules **102** to provide spatially offset haptic feedback to a user of system **100** in response to virtual contact of the user of system **100** with a virtual object presented in an artificial environment.

As illustrated in FIG. **1**, exemplary system **100** may also include one or more system hardware **120** components, such as a display **122**, position detection hardware **124**, and haptic actuators **126**. In some embodiments, display **122** may present (e.g., visually) an artificial environment for the viewer, where the environment includes at least one virtual object. Position detection hardware **124**, in some examples, may detect positions of a plurality of portions of the body of the user (e.g., head, fingers, hands, arms, and so on), such by way of one or more cameras, inertial measurement units (IMUs), or the like. Haptic actuators **126** may be arranged or positioned to provide haptic feedback over a plurality of locations on the body of the user. Examples of haptic actuators may include, but are not limited to, linear resonant actuators (LRAs), fluidic haptics, eccentric rotating masses (ERMs), piezoelectric actuators, and the like.

Returning to modules **102**, artificial environment generation module **104** may generate an artificial environment for presentation to the user of system **100**. More specifically, in at least some embodiments, artificial environment generation module **104** may produce image data for display **122** to present to the user. To generate the image data, artificial environment generation module **104** may receive data from position detection hardware **124** that indicates a location and/or orientation of the user's head to determine the user's field of view of the artificial environment. In some examples, artificial environment generation module **104** may also generate audio data and present that data (e.g., via one or more audio speakers) to the user in conjunction with the image data.

In some embodiments, the body input module **106** may use positions of the various body portions of the user, as detected via position detection hardware **124**, to determine if any locations on the body of the user are making contact with a virtual object of the artificial environment (e.g., as displayed to the user via display **122**). In some examples, the virtual object may be an object (e.g., a virtual ball, a virtual weapon, and the like) that a user may manipulate within the context of a game or other simulation. In other embodi-

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ments, the virtual object may be a virtual device particularly configured to receive user input (e.g., a virtual keyboard). Examples of user interaction and corresponding haptic feedback associated with a virtual keyboard are discussed in greater detail below in connection with FIGS. **5** and **6**.

Input-output mapping module **110**, in some embodiments, may map a plurality of body locations (e.g., possible locations of the user's body at which a virtual contact may occur) to the plurality of haptic actuators **126**. In at least some examples, at least some of these body locations are different from the plurality of locations on the body to which the haptic actuators **126** apply haptic feedback. As discussed in greater detail below with respect to FIGS. **3** and **4**, the mapping from the plurality of locations of possible virtual contact to the haptic actuators may take a number of forms. For example, each such location may be mapped to a corresponding one of the haptic actuators in a one-to-one mapping. In other cases, multiple such body locations may be mapped to the same haptic actuator in a multiple-to-one mapping. Also, in some embodiments, one or more such locations may be mapped to multiple haptic actuators. For example, a body location may be mapped to two or more different haptic actuators using a corresponding level of haptic feedback for each actuator. Further, the difference in haptic feedback level between the actuators may be based on an interpolation of a distance between a body location of a virtual contact and each of the actuators such that a shorter distance may result in a greater level of haptic feedback being applied by the associated actuator. Other types of mapping between the possible virtual contact locations on the body and the haptic actuators are also possible in other embodiments.

In some examples, input-output mapping module **110** may employ or include one or more tables or other data structures relating each potential virtual contact location to one or more haptic actuators, possibly along with some indication of a distance or one or more levels of feedback to be applied by the haptic actuator.

FIG. **2** is a flow diagram of an exemplary method **200** (e.g., a computer-implemented method) for providing spatially offset haptic feedback. The steps shown in FIG. **2** may be performed by any suitable computer-executable code and/or computing system, including, but not limited to, system **100** illustrated in FIG. **1**. In one example, each of the steps shown in FIG. **2** may represent an algorithm whose structure includes and/or is represented by multiple sub-steps, examples of which will be provided in greater detail below.

As illustrated in FIG. **2**, at step **210**, one or more of the systems described herein may generate an artificial environment (e.g., by artificial environment generation module **104**) that includes a virtual object. At step **220**, the artificial environment may be presented to the user (e.g., using display **122**). At step **230**, positioning of a body of the user may be tracked (e.g., using position detection hardware **124**). At step **240**, with a plurality of haptic actuators arranged to apply haptic feedback to a first plurality of locations, a virtual contact of one of a second plurality of second locations that are different from the first plurality of locations with the virtual object may be determined (e.g., by body input module **106**) based on the positioning of the body. At step **250**, in response to the virtual contact, at least one of the plurality of haptic actuators (e.g., haptic actuators **126**) may be activated (e.g., by haptic feedback module **108**) based on a mapping of a second plurality of body locations to the plurality of haptic actuators (e.g., by input-output mapping module **110**).



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FIGS. 3 and 4 include views of exemplary haptic gloves 300 and associated haptic wristbands 310 that may provide spatially offset haptic feedback. More specifically, FIG. 3 illustrates a top side of the user's hands wearing haptic gloves 300 and haptic wristbands 310, while FIG. 4 depicts an opposite (palm-side or underside) of the hands wearing haptic glove 300. In some embodiments, haptic gloves 300 may carry or incorporate multiple light sources 304 (e.g., light-emitting diodes (LEDs)) to facilitate detection (e.g., by a camera) of the current position of the user's hands and individual fingers. While light sources 304 are illustrated as being distributed along a top side of the user's hand and fingers, additional or alternative placements for light sources 304 (e.g., along the opposite side of the fingers and/or the palm of the hand) are also possible. In yet other examples, other types of position detection technology may be used.

Particularly in reference to FIG. 3, haptic wristbands 310 may include a strap 312 carrying or incorporating one or more haptic actuators 314. In the particular example of FIG. 4, haptic wristbands 310 may be positioned on the wrists of the user such that haptic actuators 314 are aligned along a top side of the wrist. In other examples, each haptic wristband 310 may be aligned along an underside of the corresponding wrist (e.g., the side of the wrist depicted in FIG. 4). While FIG. 4 depicts the use of five haptic actuators 314, one per finger of the associated hand, greater or fewer numbers of haptic actuators 314 may be deployed on a single haptic wristband 310 in other embodiments.

As depicted in FIG. 4, each haptic glove 300 may carry or incorporate one or more haptic actuators 416 on the palm-side of the hands. In the particular example of FIG. 4, each haptic actuator 416 at the base of a corresponding finger (e.g., on a metacarpal adjacent the corresponding finger). In other examples, fewer or greater numbers of haptic actuators 416 may be positioned on the palm side of haptic gloves 300.

Additionally or alternatively, in yet other examples not illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4, one or more haptic actuators may be configured to apply haptic feedback to other portions (e.g., forearms, elbows, upper arms, etc.) of the body of the user.

In some embodiments, one or more of haptic actuators 314 and 416 may be activated in response to a determination that a body location of the user (e.g., a fingertip) is making virtual contact with a virtual object (e.g., a key of a keyboard). More specifically, with respect to FIGS. 3 and 4, in response to contact by a fingertip with a virtual object, a corresponding one of haptic actuators 314 and/or 416 may be activated. For example, if the end of the thumb makes contact with a virtual object, haptic actuator 314 of 416 nearest that thumb may be activated. Such activation may be based on a one-to-one mapping of each fingertip to a corresponding haptic actuator 314 or 416. Other mappings between fingertips and haptic actuators 314 and/or 416, as cited above, are also possible.

FIGS. 5 and 6 include views of an exemplary virtual keyboard 502 with which a user may interact while experiencing spatially offset haptic feedback. More specifically, each progressive example presented in FIGS. 5 and 6 reflects an increasing level of engagement of a user's hands with keyboard 502. For example, virtual keyboard example 500 of FIG. 5 shows virtual hands 520 at least partially obscuring keyboard 502 as virtual hands 520 are moved toward keyboard 502 to a "pre-hover" position from the perspective of the user. As described above, the position of virtual hands 520 may be based on detection of the current locations of the user's hands and fingers (e.g., by body input module 106 using position detection hardware 124). In other examples,

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virtual hands 520 may fully obscure portions of virtual keyboard 502, as we would be the case in a real-world environment.

In virtual keyboard example 501 of FIG. 5, based on the continued detected location of the user's hands and fingers, virtual hands 520 are placed more closely over virtual keyboard 502 to a "hover" position. In response, in some embodiments, a hover indicator 504 may be displayed on the surface of virtual keyboard 502 for each finger of the user's virtual hands 520 that is located over virtual keyboard 502. In some examples, hover indicators 504 may provide a visual cue of the position of the user's fingers relative to the keys of virtual keyboard 502. Additionally or alternatively, virtual hands 520 may appear more transparent as virtual hands 520 approach virtual keyboard 502 to facilitate viewing of the individual keys of virtual keyboard 502.

Proceeding to FIG. 6, a virtual keyboard example 600 in which an index finger of one of virtual hands 520 makes an initial contact, touch, or "collision" with a key 602 of virtual keyboard 502 is depicted. In some embodiments, a visual appearance (e.g., color, contrast, etc.) of touched key 602 may be altered to emphasize which key 602 is currently being touched by the index finger of virtual hand 520. Additionally or alternatively, in other examples, the appearance of the finger making contact may be altered in some way to signify the contact. Further, as described above, a haptic system (e.g., system 100) may apply spatially offset feedback to a location on the user's body that is different than the fingertip of the index finger to represent the initial contact. Such locations may include, but are not limited to, the finger base region (e.g., the metacarpal adjacent the index finger), the wrist region corresponding to the index finger, a single wrist region for all of the fingertips of a corresponding virtual hand 520, a single forearm region for all of the fingertips of a corresponding virtual hand 520, and so on. In other examples, haptic actuators may provide haptic feedback to body locations (e.g., the neck, the back, the legs, etc.) that are more spatially offset from the body areas (e.g., fingertips) than the body locations (e.g., finger bases and wrists) discussed above.

Also depicted in FIG. 6, a virtual keyboard example 601 illustrates a keypress of touched key 602 of virtual keyboard example 600, resulting in pressed key 604. As depicted, a visual appearance of pressed key 604 may be further distinguished from that of touched key 602, as well as other keys of virtual keyboard 502. Moreover, spatially offset haptic feedback may be applied to a body area of a user that is different from the tip of the index finger that causes pressed key 604, such as a finger base of the index finger, a wrist region corresponding to the index finger, and the like. Moreover, in some embodiments, the haptic feedback associated with pressed key 604 may be of a different level or magnitude than the haptic feedback associated with touched key 602. In yet other examples, the haptic feedback associated with pressed key 604 may be applied to a different body area (e.g., a wrist region corresponding to the index finger) than that to which the haptic feedback associated with touched key 602 is applied (e.g., a finger base region corresponding to the index finger). Other variations of haptic feedback to distinguish touched key 602 from pressed key 604 may be applied, even though the portion of virtual hand 520 involved (e.g., the fingertip of the index finger) remains the same.

In view of the discussion above in conjunction with FIGS. 1-6, systems and methods of spatially offset haptic feedback may facilitate the use of a simplified configuration of haptic actuators on various locations of the user while providing



useful physical feedback for the user, such as when interacting with an artificial environment. In some examples, such as the repeated use of a virtual keyboard or other virtual input device, the user may increase speed and efficiency in the use of the input device, due at least in part to application of the spatially offset haptic feedback as an input acknowledgment mechanism.

Embodiments of the present disclosure may include or be implemented in conjunction with various types of artificial-reality systems. Artificial reality is a form of reality that has been adjusted in some manner before presentation to a user, which may include, for example, a virtual reality, an augmented reality, a mixed reality, a hybrid reality, or some combination and/or derivative thereof. Artificial-reality content may include completely computer-generated content or computer-generated content combined with captured (e.g., real-world) content. The artificial-reality content may include video, audio, haptic feedback, or some combination thereof, any of which may be presented in a single channel or in multiple channels (such as stereo video that produces a three-dimensional (3D) effect to the viewer). Additionally, in some embodiments, artificial reality may also be associated with applications, products, accessories, services, or some combination thereof, that are used to, for example, create content in an artificial reality and/or are otherwise used in (e.g., to perform activities in) an artificial reality.

Artificial-reality systems may be implemented in a variety of different form factors and configurations. Some artificial-reality systems may be designed to work without near-eye displays (NEDs). Other artificial-reality systems may include an NED that also provides visibility into the real world (such as, e.g., augmented-reality system 700 in FIG. 7) or that visually immerses a user in an artificial reality (such as, e.g., virtual-reality system 800 in FIG. 8). While some artificial-reality devices may be self-contained systems, other artificial-reality devices may communicate and/or coordinate with external devices to provide an artificial-reality experience to a user. Examples of such external devices include handheld controllers, mobile devices, desktop computers, devices worn by a user, devices worn by one or more other users, and/or any other suitable external system.

Turning to FIG. 7, augmented-reality system 700 may include an eyewear device 702 with a frame 710 configured to hold a left display device 715(A) and a right display device 715(B) in front of a user's eyes. Display devices 715(A) and 715(B) may act together or independently to present an image or series of images to a user. While augmented-reality system 700 includes two displays, embodiments of this disclosure may be implemented in augmented-reality systems with a single NED or more than two NEDs.

In some embodiments, augmented-reality system 700 may include one or more sensors, such as sensor 740. Sensor 740 may generate measurement signals in response to motion of augmented-reality system 700 and may be located on substantially any portion of frame 710. Sensor 740 may represent one or more of a variety of different sensing mechanisms, such as a position sensor, an inertial measurement unit (IMU), a depth camera assembly, a structured light emitter and/or detector, or any combination thereof. In some embodiments, augmented-reality system 700 may or may not include sensor 740 or may include more than one sensor. In embodiments in which sensor 740 includes an IMU, the IMU may generate calibration data based on measurement signals from sensor 740. Examples of sensor 740 may include, without limitation, accelerometers, gyroscopes,

magnetometers, other suitable types of sensors that detect motion, sensors used for error correction of the IMU, or some combination thereof.

In some examples, augmented-reality system 700 may also include a microphone array with a plurality of acoustic transducers 720(A)-720(J), referred to collectively as acoustic transducers 720. Acoustic transducers 720 may represent transducers that detect air pressure variations induced by sound waves. Each acoustic transducer 720 may be configured to detect sound and convert the detected sound into an electronic format (e.g., an analog or digital format). The microphone array in FIG. 8 may include, for example, ten acoustic transducers: 720(A) and 720(B), which may be designed to be placed inside a corresponding ear of the user, acoustic transducers 720(C), 720(D), 720(E), 720(F), 720(G), and 720(H), which may be positioned at various locations on frame 710, and/or acoustic transducers 720(I) and 720(J), which may be positioned on a corresponding neck-band 705.

In some embodiments, one or more of acoustic transducers 720(A)-(F) may be used as output transducers (e.g., speakers). For example, acoustic transducers 720(A) and/or 720(B) may be earbuds or any other suitable type of headphone or speaker.

The configuration of acoustic transducers 720 of the microphone array may vary. While augmented-reality system 700 is shown in FIG. 7 as having ten acoustic transducers 720, the number of acoustic transducers 720 may be greater or less than ten. In some embodiments, using higher numbers of acoustic transducers 720 may increase the amount of audio information collected and/or the sensitivity and accuracy of the audio information. In contrast, using a lower number of acoustic transducers 720 may decrease the computing power required by an associated controller 750 to process the collected audio information. In addition, the position of each acoustic transducer 720 of the microphone array may vary. For example, the position of an acoustic transducer 720 may include a defined position on the user, a defined coordinate on frame 710, an orientation associated with each acoustic transducer 720, or some combination thereof.

Acoustic transducers 720(A) and 720(B) may be positioned on different parts of the user's ear, such as behind the pinna, behind the tragus, and/or within the auricle or fossa. Or, there may be additional acoustic transducers 720 on or surrounding the ear in addition to acoustic transducers 720 inside the ear canal. Having an acoustic transducer 720 positioned next to an ear canal of a user may enable the microphone array to collect information on how sounds arrive at the ear canal. By positioning at least two of acoustic transducers 720 on either side of a user's head (e.g., as binaural microphones), augmented-reality device 700 may simulate binaural hearing and capture a 3D stereo sound field around about a user's head. In some embodiments, acoustic transducers 720(A) and 720(B) may be connected to augmented-reality system 700 via a wired connection 730, and in other embodiments acoustic transducers 720(A) and 720(B) may be connected to augmented-reality system 700 via a wireless connection (e.g., a Bluetooth connection). In still other embodiments, acoustic transducers 720(A) and 720(B) may not be used at all in conjunction with augmented-reality system 700.

Acoustic transducers 720 on frame 710 may be positioned in a variety of different ways, including along the length of the temples, across the bridge, above or below display devices 715(A) and 715(B), or some combination thereof. Acoustic transducers 720 may also be oriented such that the



microphone array is able to detect sounds in a wide range of directions surrounding the user wearing the augmented-reality system **700**. In some embodiments, an optimization process may be performed during manufacturing of augmented-reality system **700** to determine relative positioning of each acoustic transducer **720** in the microphone array.

In some examples, augmented-reality system **700** may include or be connected to an external device (e.g., a paired device), such as neckband **705**. Neckband **705** generally represents any type or form of paired device. Thus, the following discussion of neckband **705** may also apply to various other paired devices, such as charging cases, smart watches, smart phones, wrist bands, other wearable devices, hand-held controllers, tablet computers, laptop computers, other external compute devices, etc.

As shown, neckband **705** may be coupled to eyewear device **702** via one or more connectors. The connectors may be wired or wireless and may include electrical and/or non-electrical (e.g., structural) components. In some cases, eyewear device **702** and neckband **705** may operate independently without any wired or wireless connection between them. While FIG. 7 illustrates the components of eyewear device **702** and neckband **705** in example locations on eyewear device **702** and neckband **705**, the components may be located elsewhere and/or distributed differently on eyewear device **702** and/or neckband **705**. In some embodiments, the components of eyewear device **702** and neckband **705** may be located on one or more additional peripheral devices paired with eyewear device **702**, neckband **705**, or some combination thereof.

Pairing external devices, such as neckband **705**, with augmented-reality eyewear devices may enable the eyewear devices to achieve the form factor of a pair of glasses while still providing sufficient battery and computation power for expanded capabilities. Some or all of the battery power, computational resources, and/or additional features of augmented-reality system **700** may be provided by a paired device or shared between a paired device and an eyewear device, thus reducing the weight, heat profile, and form factor of the eyewear device overall while still retaining desired functionality. For example, neckband **705** may allow components that would otherwise be included on an eyewear device to be included in neckband **705** since users may tolerate a heavier weight load on their shoulders than they would tolerate on their heads. Neckband **705** may also have a larger surface area over which to diffuse and disperse heat to the ambient environment. Thus, neckband **705** may allow for greater battery and computation capacity than might otherwise have been possible on a stand-alone eyewear device. Since weight carried in neckband **705** may be less invasive to a user than weight carried in eyewear device **702**, a user may tolerate wearing a lighter eyewear device and carrying or wearing the paired device for greater lengths of time than a user would tolerate wearing a heavy standalone eyewear device, thereby enabling users to more fully incorporate artificial-reality environments into their day-to-day activities.

Neckband **705** may be communicatively coupled with eyewear device **702** and/or to other devices. These other devices may provide certain functions (e.g., tracking, localizing, depth mapping, processing, storage, etc.) to augmented-reality system **700**. In the embodiment of FIG. 7, neckband **705** may include two acoustic transducers (e.g., **720(I)** and **720(J)**) that are part of the microphone array (or potentially form their own microphone subarray). Neckband **705** may also include a controller **725** and a power source **735**.

Acoustic transducers **720(I)** and **720(J)** of neckband **705** may be configured to detect sound and convert the detected sound into an electronic format (analog or digital). In the embodiment of FIG. 7, acoustic transducers **720(I)** and **720(J)** may be positioned on neckband **705**, thereby increasing the distance between the neckband acoustic transducers **720(I)** and **720(J)** and other acoustic transducers **720** positioned on eyewear device **702**. In some cases, increasing the distance between acoustic transducers **720** of the microphone array may improve the accuracy of beamforming performed via the microphone array. For example, if a sound is detected by acoustic transducers **720(C)** and **720(D)** and the distance between acoustic transducers **720(C)** and **720(D)** is greater than, e.g., the distance between acoustic transducers **720(D)** and **720(E)**, the determined source location of the detected sound may be more accurate than if the sound had been detected by acoustic transducers **720(D)** and **720(E)**.

Controller **725** of neckband **705** may process information generated by the sensors on neckband **705** and/or augmented-reality system **700**. For example, controller **725** may process information from the microphone array that describes sounds detected by the microphone array. For each detected sound, controller **725** may perform a direction-of-arrival (DOA) estimation to estimate a direction from which the detected sound arrived at the microphone array. As the microphone array detects sounds, controller **725** may populate an audio data set with the information. In embodiments in which augmented-reality system **700** includes an inertial measurement unit, controller **725** may compute all inertial and spatial calculations from the IMU located on eyewear device **702**. A connector may convey information between augmented-reality system **700** and neckband **705** and between augmented-reality system **700** and controller **725**. The information may be in the form of optical data, electrical data, wireless data, or any other transmittable data form. Moving the processing of information generated by augmented-reality system **700** to neckband **705** may reduce weight and heat in eyewear device **702**, making it more comfortable to the user.

Power source **735** in neckband **705** may provide power to eyewear device **702** and/or to neckband **705**. Power source **735** may include, without limitation, lithium ion batteries, lithium-polymer batteries, primary lithium batteries, alkaline batteries, or any other form of power storage. In some cases, power source **735** may be a wired power source. Including power source **735** on neckband **705** instead of on eyewear device **702** may help better distribute the weight and heat generated by power source **735**.

As noted, some artificial-reality systems may, instead of blending an artificial reality with actual reality, substantially replace one or more of a user's sensory perceptions of the real world with a virtual experience. One example of this type of system is a head-worn display system, such as virtual-reality system **800** in FIG. 8, that mostly or completely covers a user's field of view. Virtual-reality system **800** may include a front rigid body **802** and a band **804** shaped to fit around a user's head. Virtual-reality system **800** may also include output audio transducers **806(A)** and **806(B)**. Furthermore, while not shown in FIG. 8, front rigid body **802** may include one or more electronic elements, including one or more electronic displays, one or more inertial measurement units (IMUS), one or more tracking emitters or detectors, and/or any other suitable device or system for creating an artificial-reality experience.

Artificial-reality systems may include a variety of types of visual feedback mechanisms. For example, display devices



in augmented-reality system **700** and/or virtual-reality system **800** may include one or more liquid crystal displays (LCDs), light emitting diode (LED) displays, organic LED (OLED) displays, digital light project (DLP) micro-displays, liquid crystal on silicon (LCoS) micro-displays, and/or any other suitable type of display screen. These artificial-reality systems may include a single display screen for both eyes or may provide a display screen for each eye, which may allow for additional flexibility for varifocal adjustments or for correcting a user's refractive error. Some of these artificial-reality systems may also include optical subsystems having one or more lenses (e.g., conventional concave or convex lenses, Fresnel lenses, adjustable liquid lenses, etc.) through which a user may view a display screen. These optical subsystems may serve a variety of purposes, including to collimate (e.g., make an object appear at a greater distance than its physical distance), to magnify (e.g., make an object appear larger than its actual size), and/or to relay (to, e.g., the viewer's eyes) light. These optical subsystems may be used in a non-pupil-forming architecture (such as a single lens configuration that directly collimates light but results in so-called pincushion distortion) and/or a pupil-forming architecture (such as a multi-lens configuration that produces so-called barrel distortion to nullify pincushion distortion).

In addition to or instead of using display screens, some the artificial-reality systems described herein may include one or more projection systems. For example, display devices in augmented-reality system **700** and/or virtual-reality system **800** may include micro-LED projectors that project light (using, e.g., a waveguide) into display devices, such as clear combiner lenses that allow ambient light to pass through. The display devices may refract the projected light toward a user's pupil and may enable a user to simultaneously view both artificial-reality content and the real world. The display devices may accomplish this using any of a variety of different optical components, including waveguide components (e.g., holographic, planar, diffractive, polarized, and/or reflective waveguide elements), light-manipulation surfaces and elements (such as diffractive, reflective, and refractive elements and gratings), coupling elements, etc. Artificial-reality systems may also be configured with any other suitable type or form of image projection system, such as retinal projectors used in virtual retina displays.

The artificial-reality systems described herein may also include various types of computer vision components and subsystems. For example, augmented-reality system **700** and/or virtual-reality system **800** may include one or more optical sensors, such as two-dimensional (2D) or 3D cameras, structured light transmitters and detectors, time-of-flight depth sensors, single-beam or sweeping laser rangefinders, 3D LiDAR sensors, and/or any other suitable type or form of optical sensor. An artificial-reality system may process data from one or more of these sensors to identify a location of a user, to map the real world, to provide a user with context about real-world surroundings, and/or to perform a variety of other functions.

The artificial-reality systems described herein may also include one or more input and/or output audio transducers. Output audio transducers may include voice coil speakers, ribbon speakers, electrostatic speakers, piezoelectric speakers, bone conduction transducers, cartilage conduction transducers, tragus-vibration transducers, and/or any other suitable type or form of audio transducer. Similarly, input audio transducers may include condenser microphones, dynamic microphones, ribbon microphones, and/or any other type or

form of input transducer. In some embodiments, a single transducer may be used for both audio input and audio output.

In some embodiments, the artificial-reality systems described herein may also include tactile (i.e., haptic) feedback systems, which may be incorporated into headwear, gloves, body suits, handheld controllers, environmental devices (e.g., chairs, floor mats, etc.), and/or any other type of device or system. Haptic feedback systems may provide various types of cutaneous feedback, including vibration, force, traction, texture, and/or temperature. Haptic feedback systems may also provide various types of kinesthetic feedback, such as motion and compliance. Haptic feedback may be implemented using motors, piezoelectric actuators, fluidic systems, and/or a variety of other types of feedback mechanisms. Haptic feedback systems may be implemented independent of other artificial-reality devices, within other artificial-reality devices, and/or in conjunction with other artificial-reality devices.

By providing haptic sensations, audible content, and/or visual content, artificial-reality systems may create an entire virtual experience or enhance a user's real-world experience in a variety of contexts and environments. For instance, artificial-reality systems may assist or extend a user's perception, memory, or cognition within a particular environment. Some systems may enhance a user's interactions with other people in the real world or may enable more immersive interactions with other people in a virtual world. Artificial-reality systems may also be used for educational purposes (e.g., for teaching or training in schools, hospitals, government organizations, military organizations, business enterprises, etc.), entertainment purposes (e.g., for playing video games, listening to music, watching video content, etc.), and/or for accessibility purposes (e.g., as hearing aids, visual aids, etc.). The embodiments disclosed herein may enable or enhance a user's artificial-reality experience in one or more of these contexts and environments and/or in other contexts and environments.

As noted, artificial-reality systems **700** and **800** may be used with a variety of other types of devices to provide a more compelling artificial-reality experience. These devices may be haptic interfaces with transducers that provide haptic feedback and/or that collect haptic information about a user's interaction with an environment. The artificial-reality systems disclosed herein may include various types of haptic interfaces that detect or convey various types of haptic information, including tactile feedback (e.g., feedback that a user detects via nerves in the skin, which may also be referred to as cutaneous feedback) and/or kinesthetic feedback (e.g., feedback that a user detects via receptors located in muscles, joints, and/or tendons).

Haptic feedback may be provided by interfaces positioned within a user's environment (e.g., chairs, tables, floors, etc.) and/or interfaces on articles that may be worn or carried by a user (e.g., gloves, wristbands, etc.). As an example, FIG. **9** illustrates a vibrotactile system **900** in the form of a wearable glove (haptic device **910**) and wristband (haptic device **920**). Haptic device **910** and haptic device **920** are shown as examples of wearable devices that include a flexible, wearable textile material **930** that is shaped and configured for positioning against a user's hand and wrist, respectively. This disclosure also includes vibrotactile systems that may be shaped and configured for positioning against other human body parts, such as a finger, an arm, a head, a torso, a foot, or a leg. By way of example and not limitation, vibrotactile systems according to various embodiments of the present disclosure may also be in the



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form of a glove, a headband, an armband, a sleeve, a head covering, a sock, a shirt, or pants, among other possibilities. In some examples, the term “textile” may include any flexible, wearable material, including woven fabric, non-woven fabric, leather, cloth, a flexible polymer material, composite materials, etc.

One or more vibrotactile devices **940** may be positioned at least partially within one or more corresponding pockets formed in textile material **930** of vibrotactile system **900**. Vibrotactile devices **940** may be positioned in locations to provide a vibrating sensation (e.g., haptic feedback) to a user of vibrotactile system **900**. For example, vibrotactile devices **940** may be positioned against the user’s finger(s), thumb, or wrist, as shown in FIG. 9. Vibrotactile devices **940** may, in some examples, be sufficiently flexible to conform to or bend with the user’s corresponding body part(s).

A power source **950** (e.g., a battery) for applying a voltage to the vibrotactile devices **940** for activation thereof may be electrically coupled to vibrotactile devices **940**, such as via conductive wiring **952**. In some examples, each of vibrotactile devices **940** may be independently electrically coupled to power source **950** for individual activation. In some embodiments, a processor **960** may be operatively coupled to power source **950** and configured (e.g., programmed) to control activation of vibrotactile devices **940**.

Vibrotactile system **900** may be implemented in a variety of ways. In some examples, vibrotactile system **900** may be a standalone system with integral subsystems and components for operation independent of other devices and systems. As another example, vibrotactile system **900** may be configured for interaction with another device or system **970**. For example, vibrotactile system **900** may, in some examples, include a communications interface **980** for receiving and/or sending signals to the other device or system **970**. The other device or system **970** may be a mobile device, a gaming console, an artificial-reality (e.g., virtual-reality, augmented-reality, mixed-reality) device, a personal computer, a tablet computer, a network device (e.g., a modem, a router, etc.), a handheld controller, etc. Communications interface **980** may enable communications between vibrotactile system **900** and the other device or system **970** via a wireless (e.g., Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, cellular, radio, etc.) link or a wired link. If present, communications interface **980** may be in communication with processor **960**, such as to provide a signal to processor **960** to activate or deactivate one or more of the vibrotactile devices **940**.

Vibrotactile system **900** may optionally include other subsystems and components, such as touch-sensitive pads **990**, pressure sensors, motion sensors, position sensors, lighting elements, and/or user interface elements (e.g., an on/off button, a vibration control element, etc.). During use, vibrotactile devices **940** may be configured to be activated for a variety of different reasons, such as in response to the user’s interaction with user interface elements, a signal from the motion or position sensors, a signal from the touch-sensitive pads **990**, a signal from the pressure sensors, a signal from the other device or system **970**, etc.

Although power source **950**, processor **960**, and communications interface **980** are illustrated in FIG. 9 as being positioned in haptic device **920**, the present disclosure is not so limited. For example, one or more of power source **950**, processor **960**, or communications interface **980** may be positioned within haptic device **910** or within another wearable textile.

Haptic wearables, such as those shown in and described in connection with FIG. 9, may be implemented in a variety of types of artificial-reality systems and environments. FIG.

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**10** shows an example artificial-reality environment **1000** including one head-mounted virtual-reality display and two haptic devices (i.e., gloves), and in other embodiments any number and/or combination of these components and other components may be included in an artificial-reality system. For example, in some embodiments there may be multiple head-mounted displays each having an associated haptic device, with each head-mounted display and each haptic device communicating with the same console, portable computing device, or other computing system.

Head-mounted display **1002** generally represents any type or form of virtual-reality system, such as virtual-reality system **800** in FIG. 8. Haptic device **1004** generally represents any type or form of wearable device, worn by a user of an artificial-reality system, that provides haptic feedback to the user to give the user the perception that he or she is physically engaging with a virtual object. In some embodiments, haptic device **1004** may provide haptic feedback by applying vibration, motion, and/or force to the user. For example, haptic device **1004** may limit or augment a user’s movement. To give a specific example, haptic device **1004** may limit a user’s hand from moving forward so that the user has the perception that his or her hand has come in physical contact with a virtual wall. In this specific example, one or more actuators within the haptic device may achieve the physical-movement restriction by pumping fluid into an inflatable bladder of the haptic device. In some examples, a user may also use haptic device **1004** to send action requests to a console. Examples of action requests include, without limitation, requests to start an application and/or end the application and/or requests to perform a particular action within the application.

While haptic interfaces may be used with virtual-reality systems, as shown in FIG. 10, haptic interfaces may also be used with augmented-reality systems, as shown in FIG. 11. FIG. 11 is a perspective view of a user **1110** interacting with an augmented-reality system **1100**. In this example, user **1110** may wear a pair of augmented-reality glasses **1120** that may have one or more displays **1122** and that are paired with a haptic device **1130**. In this example, haptic device **1130** may be a wristband that includes a plurality of band elements **1132** and a tensioning mechanism **1134** that connects band elements **1132** to one another.

One or more of band elements **1132** may include any type or form of actuator suitable for providing haptic feedback. For example, one or more of band elements **1132** may be configured to provide one or more of various types of cutaneous feedback, including vibration, force, traction, texture, and/or temperature. To provide such feedback, band elements **1132** may include one or more of various types of actuators. In one example, each of band elements **1132** may include a vibrotactor (e.g., a vibrotactile actuator) configured to vibrate in unison or independently to provide one or more of various types of haptic sensations to a user. Alternatively, only a single band element or a subset of band elements may include vibrotactors.

Haptic devices **910**, **920**, **1004**, and **1130** may include any suitable number and/or type of haptic transducer, sensor, and/or feedback mechanism. For example, haptic devices **910**, **920**, **1004**, and **1130** may include one or more mechanical transducers, piezoelectric transducers, and/or fluidic transducers. Haptic devices **910**, **920**, **1004**, and **1130** may also include various combinations of different types and forms of transducers that work together or independently to enhance a user’s artificial-reality experience. In one example, each of band elements **1132** of haptic device **1130** may include a vibrotactor (e.g., a vibrotactile actuator)



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configured to vibrate in unison or independently to provide one or more of various types of haptic sensations to a user.

#### Example Embodiments

Example 1: A system for providing spatially offset haptic feedback may include (1) a processor that generates an artificial environment that includes a virtual object, (2) a display that presents the artificial environment, (3) an input subsystem that tracks positioning of a body, and (4) a plurality of haptic actuators that are arranged to apply haptic feedback to a first plurality of locations on the body, where the processor (a) determines, based on the positioning of the body, a virtual contact of one of a second plurality of locations on the body with the virtual object, where the second plurality of locations is different from the first plurality of locations, and (b) activates, in response to the virtual contact, at least one of the plurality of haptic actuators based on a mapping of the second plurality of locations to the plurality of haptic actuators.

Example 2: The system of Example 1, where the mapping may include a one-to-one mapping of each of the second plurality of locations to a corresponding one of the plurality of haptic actuators.

Example 3: The system of Example 2, where (1) the second plurality of locations may include fingertips of a hand and (2) for each of the fingertips, the corresponding one of the plurality of haptic actuators may apply haptic feedback to a metacarpal area corresponding to the fingertip.

Example 4: The system of Example 2, where (1) the second plurality of locations may include fingertips of a hand and (2) for each of the fingertips, the corresponding one of the plurality of haptic actuators may apply haptic feedback to a wrist area corresponding to the fingertip.

Example 5: The system of Example 2, where (1) the second plurality of locations may include fingertips of a hand and (2) for each of the fingertips, the corresponding one of the plurality of haptic actuators may apply haptic feedback to a forearm area corresponding to the fingertip.

Example 6: The system of either Example 1 or Example 2, where the mapping may include at least one mapping of multiple ones of the second plurality of locations to one of the plurality of haptic actuators.

Example 7: The system of Example 6, where (1) the multiple ones of the second plurality of locations may include fingertips of a hand and (2) the one of the plurality of haptic actuators may apply haptic feedback to a metacarpal area.

Example 8: The system of Example 6, where (1) the multiple ones of the second plurality of locations may include fingertips of a hand and (2) the one of the plurality of haptic actuators may apply haptic feedback to a wrist area.

Example 9: The system of Example 6, where (1) the multiple ones of the second plurality of locations may include fingertips of a hand and (2) the one of the plurality of haptic actuators may apply haptic feedback to a forearm area.

Example 10: The system of either Example 1 or Example 2, where the mapping may map the one of the second plurality of locations to multiple ones of the plurality of haptic actuators.

Example 11: The system of Example 10, where the processor may activate, in response to determining the virtual contact, the multiple ones of the plurality of haptic actuators using at least two different levels of haptic feedback based on an interpolation of a distance between the one of the second plurality of locations and each of at least two of the plurality of haptic actuators.

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Example 12: The system of either Example 1 or Example 2, where the display may present, at a representation of the virtual object, a visual indication of the virtual contact.

Example 13: The system of either Example 1 or Example 2, where (1) the processor may further determine a level of the virtual contact at the one of the second plurality of locations and (2) activating the at least one of the plurality of haptic actuators may include causing the at least one of the plurality of haptic actuators to apply a level of haptic feedback corresponding to the level of the virtual contact.

Example 14: The system of Example 13, where the display may present a visual indication of the level of the virtual contact.

Example 15: The system of Example 14, the visual indication may be displayed at a representation of the virtual object.

Example 16: The system of Example 14, where the visual indication may be displayed at a representation of the one of the second plurality of locations.

Example 17: The system of Example 14, where (1) the virtual object may include an input button that provides input to the system and (2) the level of the virtual contact may include one of (a) contact with the input button or (b) activation of the input button.

Example 18: A haptic feedback device may include (1) a wearable article configured to be worn on a body and (2) a plurality of haptic actuators that are supported by, and arranged about, the wearable article to apply haptic feedback to a first plurality of locations on the body that are covered by the wearable article, where each actuator of the plurality of haptic actuators is activated in response to a determined virtual contact of one of a second plurality of locations on the body with a virtual object in an artificial environment based on a mapping of the second plurality of locations to the plurality of haptic actuators.

Example 19: The haptic feedback device of Example 18, where the first plurality of locations may include at least one of (1) one or more metacarpal areas, (2) one or more wrist areas, or (4) one or more forearm areas.

Example 20: A method may include (1) generating, by a processor, an artificial environment that includes a virtual object, (2) presenting, by a display, the artificial environment, (3) tracking, by an input subsystem, positioning of a body, (4) determining, by the processor based on the positioning of the body with a plurality of haptic actuators arranged to apply haptic feedback to a first plurality of locations on the body, a virtual contact of one of a second plurality of locations on the body with the virtual object, where the second plurality of locations is different from the first plurality of locations, and (5) activating, by the processor in response to the virtual contact, at least one of the plurality of haptic actuators based on a mapping of the second plurality of locations to the plurality of haptic actuators.

As detailed above, the computing devices and systems described and/or illustrated herein broadly represent any type or form of computing device or system capable of executing computer-readable instructions, such as those contained within the modules described herein. In their most basic configuration, these computing device(s) may each include at least one memory device and at least one physical processor.

In some examples, the term “memory device” generally refers to any type or form of volatile or non-volatile storage device or medium capable of storing data and/or computer-readable instructions. In one example, a memory device may store, load, and/or maintain one or more of the modules



described herein. Examples of memory devices include, without limitation, Random Access Memory (RAM), Read Only Memory (ROM), flash memory, Hard Disk Drives (HDDs), Solid-State Drives (SSDs), optical disk drives, caches, variations or combinations of one or more of the same, or any other suitable storage memory.

In some examples, the term “physical processor” generally refers to any type or form of hardware-implemented processing unit capable of interpreting and/or executing computer-readable instructions. In one example, a physical processor may access and/or modify one or more modules stored in the above-described memory device. Examples of physical processors include, without limitation, microprocessors, microcontrollers, Central Processing Units (CPUs), Field-Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs) that implement softcore processors, Application-Specific Integrated Circuits (ASICs), portions of one or more of the same, variations or combinations of one or more of the same, or any other suitable physical processor.

Although illustrated as separate elements, the modules described and/or illustrated herein may represent portions of a single module or application. In addition, in certain embodiments one or more of these modules may represent one or more software applications or programs that, when executed by a computing device, may cause the computing device to perform one or more tasks. For example, one or more of the modules described and/or illustrated herein may represent modules stored and configured to run on one or more of the computing devices or systems described and/or illustrated herein. One or more of these modules may also represent all or portions of one or more special-purpose computers configured to perform one or more tasks.

In addition, one or more of the modules described herein may transform data, physical devices, and/or representations of physical devices from one form to another. For example, one or more of the modules recited herein may receive body positioning data of a user to be transformed, transform the body positioning data into virtual contact data with a virtual object of an artificial environment, and employ the virtual contact data to activate one or more haptic actuators to provide spatially offset haptic feedback to the body of the user. Additionally or alternatively, one or more of the modules recited herein may transform a processor, volatile memory, non-volatile memory, and/or any other portion of a physical computing device from one form to another by executing on the computing device, storing data on the computing device, and/or otherwise interacting with the computing device.

In some embodiments, the term “computer-readable medium” generally refers to any form of device, carrier, or medium capable of storing or carrying computer-readable instructions. Examples of computer-readable media include, without limitation, transmission-type media, such as carrier waves, and non-transitory-type media, such as magnetic-storage media (e.g., hard disk drives, tape drives, and floppy disks), optical-storage media (e.g., Compact Disks (CDs), Digital Video Disks (DVDs), and BLU-RAY disks), electronic-storage media (e.g., solid-state drives and flash media), and other distribution systems.

The process parameters and sequence of the steps described and/or illustrated herein are given by way of example only and can be varied as desired. For example, while the steps illustrated and/or described herein may be shown or discussed in a particular order, these steps do not necessarily need to be performed in the order illustrated or discussed. The various exemplary methods described and/or

illustrated herein may also omit one or more of the steps described or illustrated herein or include additional steps in addition to those disclosed.

The preceding description has been provided to enable others skilled in the art to best utilize various aspects of the exemplary embodiments disclosed herein. This exemplary description is not intended to be exhaustive or to be limited to any precise form disclosed. Many modifications and variations are possible without departing from the spirit and scope of the present disclosure. The embodiments disclosed herein should be considered in all respects illustrative and not restrictive. Reference should be made to the appended claims and their equivalents in determining the scope of the present disclosure.

Unless otherwise noted, the terms “connected to” and “coupled to” (and their derivatives), as used in the specification and claims, are to be construed as permitting both direct and indirect (i.e., via other elements or components) connection. In addition, the terms “a” or “an,” as used in the specification and claims, are to be construed as meaning “at least one of.” Finally, for ease of use, the terms “including” and “having” (and their derivatives), as used in the specification and claims, are interchangeable with and have the same meaning as the word “comprising.”

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method comprising:

generating an artificial environment that includes a virtual keyboard associated with a specified location within the artificial environment;

displaying the generated virtual environment including the virtual keyboard at the specified location;

displaying a representation of at least one of a user's hands in the virtual environment, the representation providing an indication of the current location of the at least one hand within the virtual environment;

determining that the user has moved at least a portion of the at least one hand over the virtual keyboard, such that the representation of the user's at least one hand occludes the virtual keyboard underneath; and

dynamically modifying the generated artificial environment, such that the representation of the at least one hand becomes increasingly transparent, allowing the virtual keyboard underneath the at least one hand to be visible in the virtual environment, and wherein the representation of the at least one hand appears more transparent as the at least one hand approaches the virtual keyboard.

2. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein both the representation of the at least one hand and the virtual keyboard are visible in the virtual environment.

3. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the virtual environment displays one or more hover indicators over the virtual keyboard, each hover indicator indicating a position of at least one finger relative to the virtual keyboard.

4. The computer-implemented method of claim 3, wherein the hover indicators move in tandem with the user's fingers.

5. The computer-implemented method of claim 3, wherein the virtual environment displays at least one hover indicator for each virtual finger of the representation of the at least one hand.

6. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the representation of the at least one hand makes contact with a key of the virtual keyboard.



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7. The computer-implemented method of claim 6, wherein a hover indicator indicates which key will be pressed by each finger of the at least one hand.

8. The computer-implemented method of claim 7, wherein one or more appearance characteristics of the key that was contacted by the representation of the at least one hand are altered to indicate the key's selection.

9. The computer-implemented method of claim 6, wherein a haptic device applies haptic feedback to the user upon contacting the key of the virtual keyboard.

10. The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the haptic feedback comprises spatially offset feedback to a location of the user's body that is different than the finger of the user's hand that virtually contacted the virtual keyboard.

11. A system comprising:

a processor;

a display; and

an input subsystem that tracks positioning of a user's body,

wherein the processor:

generates an artificial environment that includes a virtual keyboard associated with a specified location within the artificial environment;

presents the generated virtual environment including the virtual keyboard at the specified location;

presents a representation of at least one of a user's hands in the virtual environment, the representation providing an indication of the current location of the at least one hand within the virtual environment;

determines that the user has moved at least a portion of the at least one hand over the virtual keyboard, such that the representation of the user's at least one hand occludes the virtual keyboard underneath; and

dynamically modifies the generated artificial environment, such that the representation of the at least one hand becomes increasingly transparent, allowing the virtual keyboard underneath the at least one hand to be visible in the virtual environment, and wherein the representation of the at least one hand appears more transparent as the at least one hand approaches the virtual keyboard.

12. The system of claim 11, further comprising one or more haptic actuators that are arranged to apply haptic feedback to one or more locations on the user's body.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the one or more haptic actuators apply haptic feedback to the one or more locations on the user's body upon at least one finger virtually contacting a key of the virtual keyboard.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the haptic feedback comprises spatially offset feedback to a location of the user's

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body that is different than the finger of the user's hand that virtually contacted the virtual keyboard.

15. The system of claim 11, wherein the processor further changes one or more visual characteristics of a key of the virtual keyboard over which the representation of the at least one hand is hovering.

16. The system of claim 11, wherein the processor further changes one or more visual characteristics of a key of the virtual keyboard that was selected by the representation of the at least one hand.

17. A device comprising:

a processor;

a display; and

an input subsystem that tracks positioning of a user's body,

wherein the processor:

generates an artificial environment that includes a virtual keyboard associated with a specified location within the artificial environment;

presents the generated virtual environment including the virtual keyboard at the specified location;

presents a representation of at least one of a user's hands in the virtual environment, the representation providing an indication of the current location of the at least one hand within the virtual environment;

determines that the user has moved at least a portion of the at least one hand over the virtual keyboard, such that the representation of the user's at least one hand occludes the virtual keyboard underneath; and

dynamically modifies the generated artificial environment, such that the representation of the at least one hand becomes increasingly transparent, allowing the virtual keyboard underneath the at least one hand to be visible in the virtual environment, and wherein the representation of the at least one hand appears more transparent as the at least one hand approaches the virtual keyboard.

18. The device of claim 17, wherein the device comprises a wearable article configured to be worn on one or more locations of a user's body.

19. The device of claim 18, wherein the one or more locations of the user's body comprise at least one of:

one or more metacarpal areas;

one or more wrist areas; or

one or more forearm areas.

20. The device of claim 17, wherein both the representation of the at least one hand and the virtual keyboard are visible in the virtual environment.

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